

Impromptu Dialogue in Children’s Drawing Activities: Focusing on Mutual Interactions to Negotiate the Drawing Frame

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Research Aims

Purpose of this Study

This study investigated how 5- to 6-year-old children produce impromptu dialogues during drawing activities in order to arrive at a shared understanding about the direction of activities.

Relationship to previous research

- ◆ When children draw with their peers, they talk about their drawings and incorporate shared ideas (Cox, 2005; Wood & Hall, 2011).
- ◆ Children nurture creativity by imitating the drawings of others (Oku, 2012).
- ◆ When two or more children draw together, “languageization of drawing,” “association,” “imitation,” and “addition of drawing” are factors related to their collaborative completion of drawing activities (Wakayama et al., 2009).

➤ Further research is required to explore what specific strategies children use for impromptu dialogue to arrive at shared understandings about the direction of their drawing activities.

Improvisational Interactions

This study relies on a conceptual framework of **improvisational interaction** in pretend play (Sawyer, 1997) . In the model shown in **Fig. 1**, each turn in the conversation is subject to a variety of interactional forces: (a) **the speaker**, who contributes something new to the flow of interaction through indexical entailment; (b) **the other children** participating in the play drama; (c) **the constraints and expectations** associated with the type of play drama being enacted, which are shared by the children prior to the play episode; and (d) **the independent, collectively created force** operating on the turn, which derives from the prior indexical presuppositions of the interaction.

- Sawyer’s notion is useful for understanding how children communicate meaning through drawing.

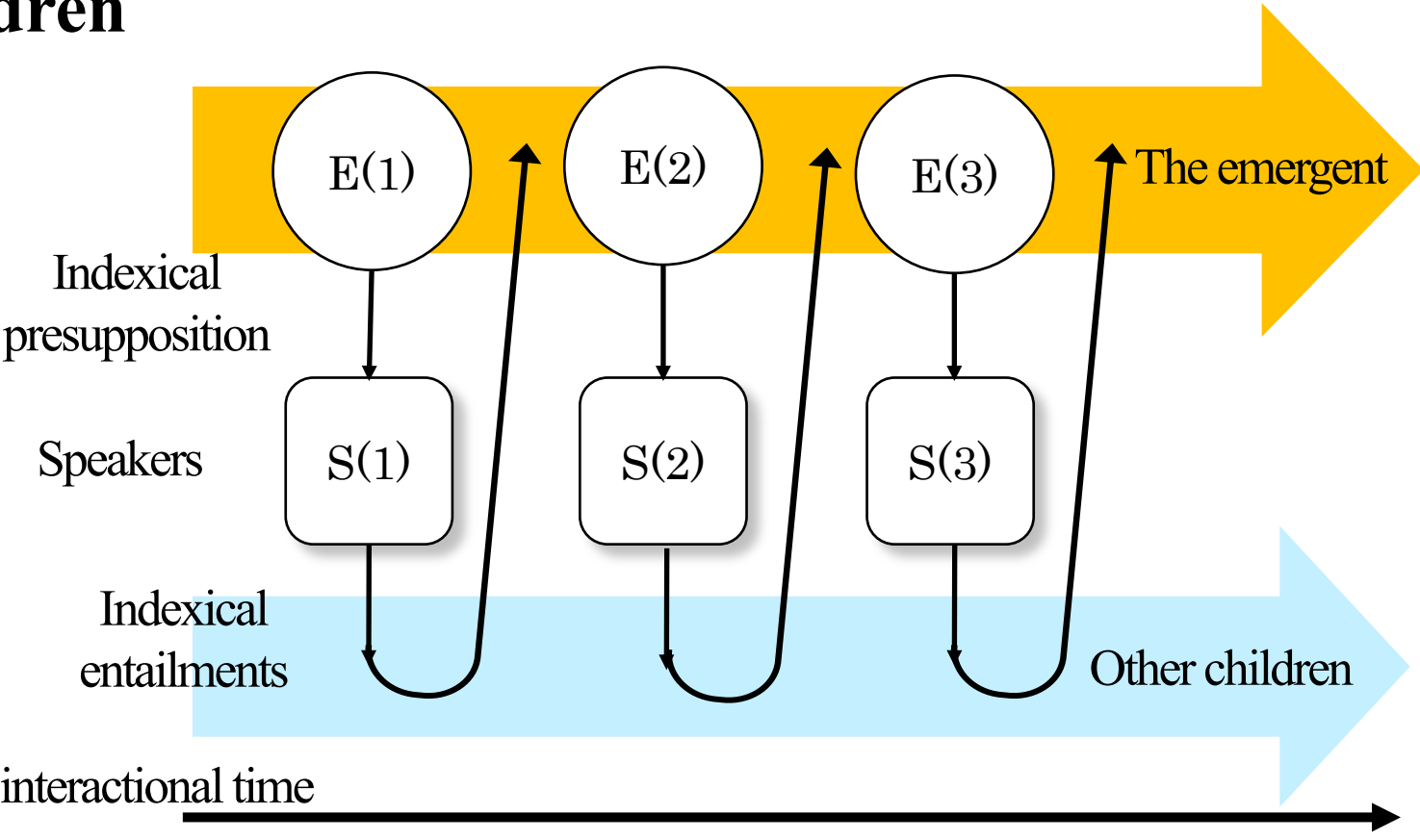


Fig.1 Improvisational interaction (Source: Sawyer,1997)

Methods

Participants

- ◆ Participants: Two classes of 5- and 6-year-olds at a daycare center
- ◆ Term: **One year** (October 2016–October 2017)
- ◆ Procedure: Episodes were analyzed qualitatively. The main data collection tools were the children's drawings and narratives, the daycare staff’s narratives, and video-recorded observations of the drawings.

Ethical Considerations

The nursery’s head gave me ethical permission to conduct this data analysis.

Theoretical frame dimension

- ◆ This study is framed by **the theory of Frame Level (Sawyer, 1997)**. This theory categorizes communications in pretend play along four dimensions: in-frame, out-of-frame, and two blended levels in between. Sawyer notes that the **”director’s voice”** plays an important role in determining the flow of activities.
- ◆ Frame Levels in drawing(DWG) activities explained in Sawyer (1997) are shown in **Table 1**.

Table 1: Frame Level

Frame Level	Definition and Case
Frame Level 1	In Frame: Completely in frame. Enacted, referencing only drawing frame transformations. For example, Kota voices as an adventurer, "I found a treasure!"
Frame Level 2	In Character, Blended Frame: Spoken as a play character (enacted), but with some references to out-of-frame, non-play objects, events, or people. Includes primarily speaking as a play character, but using another child's real name.
Frame Level 3	Out of Character, Blended Frame: Spoken as the child's real self (not enacted), but with some references to in-frame drawing transformations. “Director’s voice” is an explicit utterance that instructs next activity and plays an important function for the emergence.
Frame Level 4	Out of Character, Out of Frame; Out of character, not enacted, and not using any references to drawing frame transformations. Includes announcements of what is being done: "Will we draw together tomorrow?"

Analysis

- ◆ In all, **562 responsive actions** were categorized by interpreting video recordings.
- ◆ The responsive actions were divided broadly into three categories. Furthermore, I extracted **11 categories for these responsive actions**(Table2).

Table 2: Responsive actions during drawing activities

	Category	Definitions
Create DWG	1 Expansion (E)	Extend to a new theme
	2 Request (R)	Tell wishes about the drawings to the other participants
	3 Suggestion(S)	Present drawing ideas and rules positively
	4 Adoption(A)	Adopt ideas / motifs proposed by others for drawing
New Maintain DWG	5 Interest (In)	Interest in drawing acts and drawings by others
	6 Short Response (SR)	Answer with short sentences or cues to show doubt
	7 Imitation (Im)	Imitate the motif or theme of the other person's drawing
	8 Doubt (Do)	Ask questions about drawing
	9 Exprssed Emotion (EE)	Express emotions with words, attitudes, songs, dances
Dery DWG	10 Correction (C)	Negated drawings and presentation of alternative proposals
	11 Denial (De)	Deny a partner's drawings. There are no corrections or alternatives

Results

Result 1 In-Frame

Eita was drawing a scary map by himself. As Kota suddenly entered Eita's drawing as an adventurer, they were trying to draw adventure maps collaboratively.

- Two boys were drawing maps while acting adventurers all over; that's why the utterances (① ~ ⑦) were implicit sequences that had the function of a ”director's voice"
- The chain of "None (Tag Question)” utterances was thought to be an expression of "sharing sense of unity", and they tried to keep the frames by implicitly negotiating while playing adventurers.

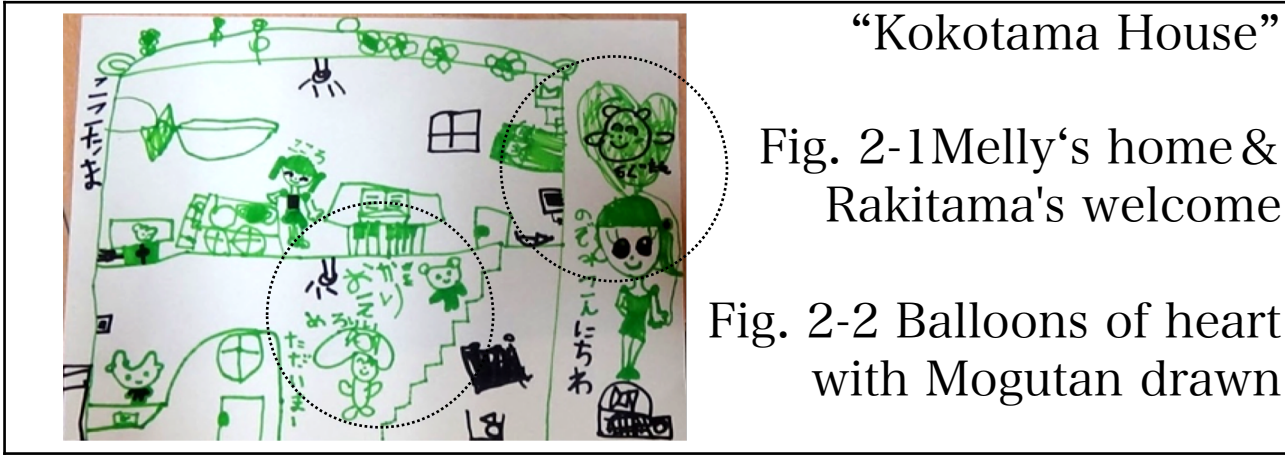


Eita (boy : 5Yrs9mos)	F 4	F 3	F 2	F 1	F 2	F 3	F 4	Kota (boy : 5Yrs9mos)
(drawing a scary map) There is a sharp needle. you sink into the sea of poison.								
② I found it 10 years ago.(None)			A	E				①I found an ammonite.
Don't draw here(Turn over the paper and draw it)			A	E				It's like this (trying to draw on Eita's paper)
④ This is a "surprise 6534 treasure" .(None)				E				③Here was the face of a mammoth.(None)
				S				Here the mammoth is found (painted round)
				E				⑤What child found was a very wonderful! It was a dinosaur shit.(None)
⑥Well, what the baby found is a dinosaur egg.(None)			A					How do you write "φyu"?
After writing "Yu", write "Yuurei Yashiki" and draw a haunted house painted black.			Sr	A				
				E				⑦Something was found in the field. No one knows what it is. (write?)", bones of Tyrannosaurs were found in the sandbox!
There was a super-saul here (write "I")			A					

Result 2 Out-Frame

Two girls drew a favorite animation program, *Kokotama House*. A conflict occurs when one draws “Kokoro”(⑤⑥). After all, Miyako’s utterance (⑦) made Karen to draw “Nozomi” instead.

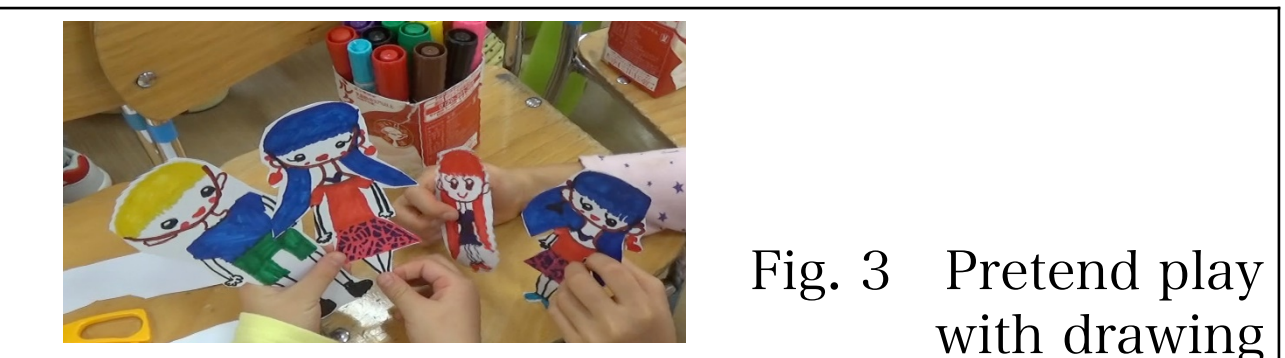
- Director’s voice on the situation setting (①②③) and who will draw what (⑤) was done via explicit utterances.
- **Concessional utterances** (⑦⑨) are regarded as a kind of ”director's voice" that induces the drawing action of the opponent.
- **“Doubt”** (⑧⑩) plays an important role in seeking a common understanding of the drawing.



Karen (girl : 6Yrs9mos)	F 4	F 3	F 2	F 1	F 2	F 3	F 4	Miyako (girl : 6Yrs0mos)
②Rakitama came to say "Welcome back".			A					①Mellory just came home.
Write "Welcome back."				A				③She says "Welcome back" at the stairs.
④Well, can I draw "Kokoro" here?			S					Write "I'm home"
⑥What? I also want to draw it!			Ee					⑤I also want to draw it.
OK! Nozomi ♪ Draw while singing				A				⑦Well, I'll draw Nozomi instead. But I don't know it.
That's right. Here is Missil.			Sr					⑧Why is not Mellory here? Is that because she just returned?
All right. I'll try my best.			A					⑨Can you draw Missil because I don't know it?
⑩Is it a Mogutan's balloon?			Do					Draw a Mogutan's face in a balloon.
Well, is it a Mogutan's balloon?			Do					Isn't it lovey?
								Well, Mogutan is on a balloon.

Result 3 Blended-Frame

- Using explicit and implicit proposals, two girls drawing girls separately started to draw a member of the family and play with them.
- A common frame was created by Rika’s cutting drawings with scissors and making explicit suggestions (①) using a ”director's voice."
- Karen made remarks like a line that calls "father" while playing the role of a girl(③④), in order to refuse Rika’s explicit proposal (②).
- Karen's utterance (③④⑤) urged the other’s drawing act by giving an instruction implicitly within the frame.



Karen (girl : 6Yrs11mos)	F 4	F 3	F 2	F 1	F 2	F 3	F 4	Rika (girl : 6Yrs8mos)
Draw a girl.								Start imitating Karen’s drawing.
Start drawing another girl.				E				
OK! Draw while singing				Ee				①(Cut the girl with scissors).Here is the universe.
OK.								②Hey, make another friend!
Do I draw it? I am tired.								Please draw it here. (Pass paper)
								You can do it!Drawit quickly!
③ My mother is designing an aircraft at the office. My father is coming home from the company soon (while playing the "girl")								
④Daddy!(While playing "girl" calling her father)								(Start drawing the father)
⑤My father has hair blond! (While playing "girl")								(Start painting father’s hair with yellow.)

General Discussion

1. We confirmed that a **diverse and multilayered “director's voice”** is embedded in responsive actions of drawing activities and plays an important function in spreading and deepening drawing expressions.
2. We found the following two points on the **correlation between explicit and implicit utterances**. First, if the first utterance is explicit, the next response is also explicit, and vice versa. Second, it is effective to make an implicit response to approve an explicit proposal. This partly supports some of Sawyer's findings.
3. The role of the **“director's voice” was not fixed to the particular child**. One reason why “director's voices” mutually occur is that the drawing plays the function of maintaining the drawing frame **as one “explicit voice”**.

Directions for Future Research

- ◆ Future studies will examine the correlations between peer consciousness and drawing expressions based on longitudinal participation observations.

Acknowledgements

- ◆ This work is supported by **popIn Inc.** and the **Center for Early Childhood Development, Education, and Policy Research.**≈ç